Terrestrial Animal Health Standards Commission February 2016

CHAPTER 4.3.

ZONING AND COMPARTMENTALISATION

Article 4.3.1.

Introduction

~~For the purposes of the *Terrestrial Code*, 'zoning' and 'regionalisation' have the same meaning.~~

Establishing and maintaining a *disease* free status throughout the country should be the final goal for Member Countries. However, given the difficulty of establishing and maintaining a *disease* free status for an entire territory, especially for *diseases*, the entry of which is difficult to control through measures at national boundaries, there may be benefits to a Member Country in establishing and maintaining a *subpopulation* with a distinct health status within its territory for the purpose of *disease* control or *international trade*. *Subpopulations* may be separated by natural or artificial geographical barriers or~~, in certain situations,~~ by the application of appropriate management practices.

~~Zoning and compartmentalisation are procedures implemented by a Member Country under the provisions of this chapter with a view to defining *subpopulations* of distinct health status within its territory for the purpose of *disease* control and/or *international trade*.~~ While zoning applies to an animal *subpopulation* defined primarily on a geographical basis ~~(using natural, artificial or legal boundaries)~~, compartmentalisation applies to an animal *subpopulation* defined primarily by management and husbandry practices related to *biosecurity*. In practice, spatial considerations and good management, including *biosecurity plans*, play important roles in the application of both concepts.

~~A particular application of the concept of zoning is the establishment of a *containment zone*. In the event of limited *outbreaks* of a specified *disease* within an otherwise free country or *zone*, a single *containment zone*, which includes all *cases*, can be established for the purpose of minimizing the impact on the entire country or *zone*.~~

~~This chapter is to assist Member Countries wishing to establish and maintain different *subpopulations* within their territory using the principles of compartmentalisation and zoning. These principles should be applied in accordance with the measures recommended in the relevant *disease* chapter(s). This chapter also outlines a process through which trading partners may recognise such *subpopulations*. This process is best implemented by trading partners through establishing parameters and gaining agreement on the necessary measures prior to *outbreaks* of *disease*.~~

~~Before trade in *animals* or their products may occur, an *importing country* needs to be satisfied that its *animal health status* will be appropriately protected. In most cases, the import regulations developed will rely in part on judgements made about the effectiveness of sanitary procedures undertaken by the *exporting country*, both at its borders and within its territory.~~

~~As well as contributing to the safety of *international trade*, zoning and compartmentalisation may assist *disease* control or eradication within a Member Country's territory.~~ Zoning may encourage the more efficient use of resources within certain parts of a country and compartmentalisation may allow the functional separation of a *subpopulation* from other domestic ~~*animals*~~ or *wild animals* through *biosecurity* ~~measures~~, which a *zone* ~~(through geographical separation)~~ would not achieve through geographical separation. In a country where a *disease* in endemic, establishment of *free zones* may assist in the progressive control and eradication of the *disease*. Following a *disease outbreak* in a previously free country, to facilitate *disease* control and the continuation of trade, the use of zoning may allow a Member Country to limit the extension of the *disease* to a defined restricted area, while preserving the status of the remaining territory. ~~the~~ The use of compartmentalisation may allow a Member Country to take advantage of epidemiological links among *subpopulations* or common practices relating to *biosecurity*, despite diverse geographical locations~~, to facilitate *disease* control and/or the continuation of trade~~. A Member Country may thus have more than one *zone* or *compartment* within its territory.

~~Zoning and compartmentalisation cannot be applied to all *diseases* but separate requirements will be developed for each *disease* for which the application of zoning or compartmentalisation is considered appropriate.~~

~~To regain free status following a *disease outbreak* in a *zone* or *compartment*, Member Countries should follow the recommendations in the relevant *disease* chapter in the *Terrestrial Code*.~~

The purpose of this chapter is to provide recommendations on the principles of zoning and compartmentalisation to Member Countries wishing to establish and maintain different *subpopulations* within their territory. These principles should be applied in accordance with the relevant chapters of the *Terrestrial Code*. This chapter also outlines a process by which trading partners may recognise such *subpopulations*.

Article 4.3.2.

General considerations

The *Veterinary Services* of ~~an *exporting*~~ a Member ~~country~~ Country ~~which~~ that is establishing a *zone* or *compartment* within its territory ~~for *international trade* purposes~~ should clearly define the *subpopulation* in accordance with the recommendations in the relevant chapters ~~in~~ of the *Terrestrial Code*, including those on *surveillance*, and the *identification* and *traceability* of ~~live~~ *animals*. ~~The *Veterinary Services* of an *exporting country* should be able to explain to the *Veterinary Services* of an *importing country* the basis for claiming a distinct *animal health status* for the given *zone* or *compartment* under consideration.~~

The procedures used to establish and maintain the distinct *animal health status* of a *zone* or *compartment* ~~will~~ depend on the epidemiology of the *disease*, including ~~in particular~~ the presence and role of susceptible *wildlife* ~~species,~~ and environmental factors, as well as on the application of *biosecurity* and *sanitary measures*.

Biosecurity and *surveillance* are essential components of zoning and compartmentalisation, and the arrangements should be developed through active cooperation of industry and *Veterinary Services*.

The authority, organisation and infrastructure of the *Veterinary Services*, including *laboratories*, should be clearly documented in accordance with ~~the~~ Chapters 3.1. and 3.2. ~~on the evaluation of *Veterinary Services* of the *Terrestrial Code*~~, to provide confidence in the integrity of the *zone* or *compartment*. The final authority ~~of~~ over the *zone* or *compartment*, for the purposes of domestic and *international trade*, lies with the *Veterinary Authority*. The *Veterinary Authority* should conduct an assessment of the resources needed and available to establish and maintain a *zone* or *compartment*. These include the human and financial resources and the technical capability of the *Veterinary Services* (and of the relevant industry and production system, in the case of a *compartment*), including for *disease surveillance* and diagnosis.

In the context of maintaining the *animal health status* of a *population* or *subpopulation* of a country, *zone* or *compartment*, ~~references to 'import', 'importation' and 'imported animals/ products' found in the *Terrestrial Code* apply both to~~ importations into ~~a~~ the country as well as ~~and to the~~ movements of *animals* and their products into the *zones* ~~and~~ or *compartments*. ~~Such movements~~ should be the subject of appropriate *sanitary measures* ~~to preserve the *animal health status* of the country, *zone/* or *compartment*~~.

The *Veterinary Services* should provide movement certification, and carry out documented periodic inspections of facilities, *biosecurity*, records and *surveillance* procedures. *Veterinary Services* should conduct or audit *surveillance*, reporting and *laboratory* diagnostic examinations.

~~The *exporting country* should be able to demonstrate, through detailed documentation provided to the *importing country*, that it has implemented the recommendations in the *Terrestrial Code* for establishing and maintaining such a *zone* or *compartment*.~~

~~An *importing country* should recognise the existence of this *zone* or *compartment* when the appropriate measures recommended in the *Terrestrial Code* are applied and the *Veterinary Authority* of the *exporting country* certifies that this is the case.~~

~~The *exporting country* should conduct an assessment of the resources needed and available to establish and maintain a *zone* or *compartment* for *international trade* purposes. These include the human and financial resources, and the technical capability of the *Veterinary Services* (and of the relevant industry and production system, in the case of a *compartment*) including *disease surveillance* and diagnosis.~~

~~*Biosecurity* and *surveillance* are essential components of zoning and compartmentalisation, and the arrangements should be developed through cooperation of industry and *Veterinary Services*.~~

~~Industry's responsibilities include the application of *biosecurity* measures, documenting and recording movements of *animals* and personnel, quality assurance schemes, monitoring the efficacy of the measures, documenting corrective actions, conducting *surveillance*, rapid reporting and maintenance of records in a readily accessible form.~~

~~The *Veterinary Services* should provide movement certification, and carry out documented periodic inspections of facilities, *biosecurity* measures, records and *surveillance* procedures. *Veterinary Services* should conduct or audit *surveillance*, reporting and *laboratory* diagnostic examinations.~~

Article 4.3.3.

Principles for defining and establishing a zone or compartment~~, including protection and containment zones~~

~~In conjunction with the above considerations, the~~ The following principles ~~should~~ apply when Member Countries define a *zone* or a *compartment*.

1) The extent of a *zone* and its geographical limits should be established by the *Veterinary Authority* on the basis of natural, artificial ~~and/~~or legal boundaries, and made public through official channels.

~~2) A *protection zone* may be established to preserve the health status of *animals* in a free country or *zone*, from adjacent countries or *zones* of different *animal health status*. Measures should be implemented based on the epidemiology of the *disease* under consideration to prevent introduction of the pathogenic agent and to ensure early detection.~~

~~These measures should include intensified movement control and *surveillance* and may include:~~

~~a) *animal identification* and *animal traceability* to ensure that *animals* in the *protection zone* are clearly distinguishable from other populations;~~

~~b) *vaccination* of all or at risk susceptible *animals*;~~

~~c) testing and/or *vaccination* of *animals* moved;~~

~~d) specific procedures for sample handling, sending and testing;~~

~~e) enhanced *biosecurity* including cleansing – *disinfection* procedures for transport means, and possible compulsory routes;~~

~~f) specific *surveillance* of susceptible *wildlife* species and relevant *vectors*;~~

~~g) awareness campaigns to the public or targeted at breeders, traders, hunters, *veterinarians*.~~

~~The application of these measures can be in the entire free *zone* or in a defined area within and/or outside the free *zone*.~~

~~3) In the event of limited *outbreaks* in a country or *zone* previously free of a *disease*, a *containment zone* may be established for the purposes of trade. Establishment of a *containment zone* should be based on a rapid response including:~~

~~a) Appropriate standstill of movement of *animals* and other *commodities* upon notification of suspicion of the specified *disease* and the demonstration that the *outbreaks* are contained within this zone through epidemiological investigation (trace-back, trace-forward) after confirmation of *infection*. The primary *outbreak* has been identified and investigations on the likely source of the *outbreak* have been carried out and all *cases* shown to be epidemiologically linked.~~

~~b) A *stamping-out policy* or another effective control strategy aimed at eradicating the *disease* should be applied and the susceptible animal population within the *containment zones* should be clearly identifiable as belonging to the *containment zone*. Increased passive and targeted *surveillance* in accordance with Chapter 1.4. in the rest of the country or *zone* should be carried out and has not detected any evidence of *infection*.~~

~~c) Measures consistent with the *disease* specific chapter should be in place to prevent spread of the *infection* from the *containment zone* to the rest of the country or *zone*, including ongoing *surveillance* in the *containment zone*.~~

~~d) For the effective establishment of a *containment zone*, it is necessary to demonstrate that there have been no new *cases* in the *containment zone* within a minimum of two *incubation periods* from the last detected *case*.~~

~~e) The free status of the areas outside the *containment zone* would be suspended pending the establishment of the *containment zone*. The free status of these areas could be reinstated, once the *containment zone* is clearly established, irrespective of the provisions of the *disease* specific chapter.~~

~~f) The *containment zone* should be managed in such a way that it can be demonstrated that *commodities* for *international trade* can be shown to have originated outside the *containment zone*.~~

~~g) The recovery of the free status of the *containment zone* should follow the provisions of the *disease* specific chapter.~~

~~4~~2) The factors defining a *compartment* should be established by the *Veterinary Authority* on the basis of relevant criteria such as management and husbandry practices related to *biosecurity*, and made public through official channels.

~~5~~3) *Animals* and *herds/flocks* belonging to ~~such~~ *subpopulations* of *zones* or *compartments* ~~need to~~ should be recognisable as such through a clear epidemiological separation from other *animals* and all ~~things~~ factors presenting a *disease risk*. ~~For a *zone* or *compartment*, the~~ The *Veterinary Authority* should document in detail the measures taken to ensure the identification of the *subpopulation* and the establishment and maintenance of its health status through a *biosecurity plan*. The measures used to establish and maintain the distinct *animal health status* of a *zone* or *compartment* should be appropriate to the particular circumstances, and ~~will~~ depend on the epidemiology of the *disease*, environmental factors, the health status of *animals* in adjacent areas, applicable *biosecurity* ~~measures~~ (including movement controls, use of natural and artificial boundaries, the spatial separation of *animals*, and commercial management and husbandry practices), and *surveillance*.

~~6~~4) Relevant *animals* within the *zone* or *compartment* should be identified in such a way that their movements are traceable. Depending on the system of production, identification may be done at the *herd*/~~,~~ *flock* ~~lot~~ or individual animal level. Relevant animal movements into and out of the *zone* or *compartment* should be well documented and controlled. The existence of a valid *animal identification system* is a prerequisite to assess the integrity of the *zone* or *compartment*.

~~7~~5) For a *compartment*, the *biosecurity plan* should describe the partnership between the relevant industry and the *Veterinary Authority*, and their respective responsibilities. It should also describe the routine operating procedures to provide clear evidence that the *surveillance* conducted, the ~~live~~ *animal identification* and *traceability* system, and the management practices are adequate to meet the definition of the *compartment*. In addition to information on animal movement controls, the plan should include *herd*/~~ or *flock*~~ production records, feed sources, *surveillance* results, birth and *death* records, visitor logbook, morbidity and mortality history, medications, *vaccinations*, documentation of training of relevant personnel and any other criteria necessary for evaluation of *risk management*. The information required may vary in accordance with the species and *diseases* under consideration. The *biosecurity plan* should also describe how the measures will be audited to ensure that the *risks* are regularly ~~re-assessed~~ reassessed and the measures adjusted accordingly.

Article 4.3.4.

Free zone

A *free zone* is one in which the absence of a specific *disease*, *infection* or *infestation* in an animal population has been demonstrated by *surveillance* in accordance with the relevant requirements of the *Terrestrial Code*.

In conjunction with Articles 4.3.2. and 4.3.3., and depending on the prevailing epidemiological situation, the free status demonstration may require past or ongoing pathogen-specific *surveillance*, as well as appropriate *biosecurity* and *sanitary measures*, within the *zone* and at its borders. The *surveillance* should be conducted in accordance with Chapter 1.4. or the relevant *disease*-specific chapters of the *Terrestrial Code*.

The free status can apply to one or more susceptible animal species populations, domestic or wild.

So long as an ongoing *surveillance* demonstrates there is no occurrence of the specific *disease*, *infection* or *infestation*, the *zone* keeps its free status.

Article 4.3.5.

Infected zone

An *infected zone* is one in which a *disease*, *infection* or *infestation* either has been diagnosed, or the absence of which cannot be demonstrated. In the latter case, the *disease*-specific chapter of the *Terrestrial Code* contains an article describing the conditions for free and infected status.

An *infected zone* may be:

- a *zone* of a country where the *disease* has been present for a long period and has not yet been eradicated, while other *zones* of the country have been free;

- a *zone* of a country or *zone* previously free, in which the *disease* has been reintroduced, while the rest of the country or *zone* remains unaffected.

To gain free status in an *infected zone*, or regain free status following a *disease outbreak* in a previously *free zone*, Member Countries should follow the recommendations in the relevant *disease*-specific chapters of the *Terrestrial Code*.

Article 4.3.6.

Protection zone

A *protection zone* may be established to preserve the *animal health status* of an *animal population* in a free country or a *free zone* from introduction of a pathogenic agent of a specific *disease*, *infection* or *infestation* from adjacent countries or *zones* of different status. *Biosecurity* and *sanitary measures* should be implemented based on the animal management systems, the epidemiology of the *disease* under consideration and the epidemiological situation prevailing in an adjacent infected country or *zone*.

These measures should include intensified movement control and *surveillance* and may include:

1) specific *animal identification* and *animal traceability* to ensure that *animals* in the *protection zone* are clearly distinguishable from other populations;

2) *vaccination* of all or at risk susceptible *animals*;

3) testing or *vaccination* of *animals* moved;

4) specific procedures for sample handling, dispatching and testing;

5) enhanced *biosecurity* including *disinfection* procedures for *vehicles*/*vessels*, and possible compulsory routes;

6) specific *surveillance* of susceptible *wildlife* and relevant *vectors*;

7) awareness campaigns aimed at the public or targeted at breeders, traders, hunters or *veterinarians*.

The *protection zone* may be a part of an *infected zone* or of a *free zone*.

Article 4.3.7.

Containment zone

In the event of limited *outbreaks* in a country or *zone* previously free from a *disease*, a *containment zone* may be established for the purposes of *disease* control or trade.

Establishment of a *containment zone* should be based on a rapid response, prepared in a contingency plan, including:

1) appropriate standstill of movement of *animals* and other *commodities* upon notification of suspicion of the specified *disease*;

2) epidemiological investigation (trace-back, trace-forward) after confirmation of *infection*, demonstrating that the *outbreaks* are epidemiologically linked and contained within the *zone*;

3) *stamping-out policy* or another effective emergency control strategy aimed at eradicating the *disease*;

4) clear identification of the susceptible animal population within the *containment zone* enabling its recognition as belonging to the *containment zone*;

5) increased passive and targeted *surveillance* in accordance with Chapter 1.4. in the rest of the country or *zone* demonstrating no evidence of *infection*;

6) *sanitary measures*, including on-going *surveillance* in the *containment zone*, consistent with the *disease*-specific chapter, to prevent spread of the *infection* from the *containment zone* to the rest of the country or *zone*.

For the effective establishment of a *containment zone*, it is necessary to demonstrate that there have been no new *cases* in the *containment zone* within a minimum of two *incubation periods* from the last detected *case*.

The free status of the areas outside the *containment zone* would be suspended pending demonstration of the effectiveness of the *containment zone*. The free status of these areas may then be reinstated, irrespective of the provisions of the *disease*-specific chapter.

The *containment zone* is an infected zone that should be managed in such a way that *commodities* for *international trade* can be shown to have originated from inside or outside the *containment zone*. Well managed, it may allow the rest of the country or *zone* to keep their free status.

Article 4.3.8.

Bilateral recognition by trading countries

Trading partners should exchange information allowing the recognition of different *subpopulations* within their respective territories. This recognition process is best implemented through establishing parameters and gaining agreement on the necessary measures prior to *outbreaks* of *disease*.

The *Veterinary Services* of an *exporting country* should be able to explain to the *Veterinary Services* of an *importing country* the basis for claiming a distinct *animal health status* for the given *zone* or *compartment* under consideration.

The *exporting country* should be able to demonstrate, through detailed documentation provided to the *importing country*, that it has implemented the recommendations in the *Terrestrial Code* for establishing and maintaining such a *zone* or *compartment*.

An *importing country* should recognise the existence of this *zone* or *compartment* when the appropriate measures recommended in the *Terrestrial Code* are applied and the *Veterinary Authority* of the *exporting country* certifies that this is the case.

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